

CLUB WORLD CUP  
Atlanta into  
semis

SOCCERNET

Atlanta breezed past Auckland City and into a semifinal meeting with Barcelona at the FIFA Club World Cup with a comfortable win on Saturday.

Daniel Arreola opened the scoring in the 36th minute and Auckland's hopes were all but ended when Christian Bermudez added a second in the 69th minute. Lucas Silva then struck in injury time to put the seal on the win.

Atlanta enjoyed the best of the opening exchanges, with Jose Gonzalez, Rafael Marquez and Guillermo Rojas all threatening early on.

The goal came when Auckland failed to clear a corner with the ball falling for Arreola to lash it into the bottom corner.

Auckland were struggling to get anything going, with their only two chances falling to Lee Ki Hyung, who fired wide both times.

Chad Coombes then had a go for the New Zealanders early in the second half, but saw his shot saved. Marquez then went close twice at the other end before Bermudez snatched the second with a smart shot past the goalkeeper from inside the area.

Silva came off the bench to put the icing on the cake as he capped a fine move with an easy finish.

Auckland will now go into the play-off for fifth place, against Mazembe.

Ancelotti not  
worried

AFP, London

Carlo Ancelotti insisted Chelsea's Premier League title challenge remains in robust health ahead of the busy festive period despite their sloppy 3-3 draw with Everton.

The west Londoners' aura of invincibility has taken a severe bruising in recent weeks, with the club knocked out of the League Cup by Blackburn, beaten by Manchester City in the league and held to a home draw in their final Champions League group game by Apoel Nicosia.

The blip became a fully fledged slump on Saturday, when Chelsea leaked three goals from set-pieces in drawing at home to a struggling Everton and their defence once again failed to impress.

Dhoni calls

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but those catches and those run outs really mattered in the end. We had our chances, quite a few of them really, and we didn't take them.

"From there on, it was just a case of trying to contain because once we let go of the chances, there was no way of putting pressure on the opposition."

Yuvraj, whose rambunctious innings made a massive difference, said his 28th birthday was his best to date. "This is my best birthday till now. I am very happy the way we played, especially the batsmen. Frankly I was not expecting to score 60 or 25 balls." He also credited India's coach Gary Kirsten. "He is the best coach that I have ever played under," said Yuvraj. "He understands the game and the pressure."

The sides will now begin a five-match ODI series on December 15 in Rajkot.

Real leave

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defeat for failing Espanyol who have also failed to score in any of those four losses.

Earlier, Athletic Bilbao moved to within four points of the top four with a 2-1 win away at Real Zaragoza.

A towering header from 20-year-old defender Mikel San Jose, on loan from Liverpool, put Bilbao ahead on the hour before Markel Susaeta scored what proved a vital second goal nine minutes from time.

The Basque club, who during last season were at times battling the drop, move up one position to seventh.

No way back

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accused Toni of having too big an ego and saying he simply did not fit in with the team.

"Football at Bayern Munich is of the highest level and every player who comes here promises to give it their all when they sign a contract," he explained.

"Football is not about individuals, it is a team sport."

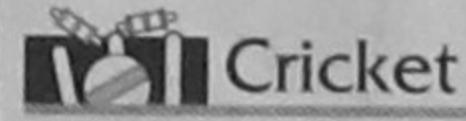
"It is not a hobby, it is a profession and that is the difference."



Belgium's former world number one Justine Henin plays a backhand return against Russia's Nadia Petrova during their exhibition tournament match at Cairo's Al-Gezira Club on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Ntini relishes a milestone



CRICINFO, undated

At Centurion on Wednesday, an African icon will reach a very special milestone. When, back in March 1998, Makhaya Ntini became the first black South African to represent his country, few could have predicted that he would still be going strong more than a decade later. And yet, he now stands on the cusp of 100 Test caps, an achievement matched by only six out-and-out fast bowlers.

"It's something you can only dream about," Ntini told Cricinfo during South Africa's training camp in Potchefstroom. "You look at most fast bowlers and they never pass 100 caps. For me, being a fast bowler, it's something that you start thinking about once you reach 70-odd games. Every player wants to achieve it."

"Lord's, obviously, was special because it was a long wait," said Ntini. "Four years previously I spoke to Corrie van Zyl [the assistant coach] and said if I get my chance I want to leave my name on the board. Then, when I played in 2003, he reminded me of that and told me it was my chance. After the first five-wicket haul he tapped me on the shoulder and said: 'There are only nine players who have done a ten-for.'

Ntini was made to wait for his tenth of the match, as Andrew Flintoff clubbed a memorable but futile century, but eventually, with two wickets remaining Steve Harmison holed out to Andrew Hall, and Ntini had made his notch in history. "When the moment arrived I couldn't even feel myself because everywhere I looked the crowd were standing and clapping," he said. "I had to kiss the ground of Lord's. It was a moment I had been waiting for."

Injuries would come along. That kept me going. And to have a captain like Hansie Cronje, the person who told me I was on a learning curve. He said: 'Stay fit, stay focused and the chance will come.'

Ntini was just 20 years old when he took the field at Newlands for his first Test against Sri Lanka, and to this day, the moment he was presented with his cap remains his proudest moment. "When you are stood out there on the field before play, the captain pulls out the cap and says: 'Here's your first one. Hopefully the first of many.'

In terms of onfield action, however, few memories can contend with his stunning performance at Lord's in 2003, when he became the first South African to claim ten wickets on the most famous ground in the world, in a performance that propelled his country to a memorable innings victory.

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These days, Ntini is among the most prominent role-models in his country. Only last week, he was in Cape Town, taking part in the draw for the 2010 Football World Cup. But a decade ago, when he launched his career, he himself had role-models to look up to - and in most cases, to play alongside.

"Allan Donald, Shaun Pollock, Lance Klusener, Brian McMillan. Those were the main players, then I became the fifth one," said Ntini.

"I took all the advice and practised it. When one retired, my chances came along, and I knew

pitches in South Africa.

"I don't think you can be totally sure how Jimmy feels until we see how his knee settles down after this game," said Strauss. "I'm not overly concerned but when you pick a bowler you want him to be as close to 100% fit as possible - because in these conditions, you're going to be asking quite a lot of your fast bowlers."

England's other injury concern, Ryan Sidebottom, showed he was fully recovered from his side problem, taking 5 for 42 from 16.3 overs. It may not be enough to force himself into the starting line-up at Centurion, should Anderson be fit, but Strauss was pleased with his performance.

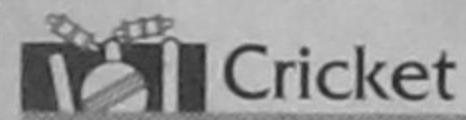
"It was very encouraging to see the way Ryan bowled. I was very impressed with him. The ball hit the gloves hard; he swung it, reverse-swung it at the end - and he's always pretty accurate. It's a pretty good combination when he's got all that going."

The biggest issue facing the England selectors is the balance of the side and despite Luke Wright's inclusion in warm-up game as a fifth bowler, Strauss conceded that no decision had been made as yet.

"I maintain that whenever you pick an XI you've got to pick an XI to win a Test match - but there are different ways of doing that," he said. "We certainly haven't nailed our colours to the mast on the balance issue at this stage. It would be wrong for us to do that before we've seen the conditions at Centurion - and how Jimmy recovers from this game. It is clearly a big decision we're going to need to make in the coming days."

## Anderson impresses

### Strauss



CRICINFO, undated

Andrew Strauss is confident that strike bowler James Anderson will be fit for the first Test at Centurion Park after he came through a reasonable workout during England's warm-up game in East London.

Anderson has been carrying a mystery problem to his right knee all tour but bowled 15 overs against a South African Invitational XI and Strauss is pleased with how the injury is progressing, although knows the next three days are important.

"There is an element of risk, but a small one. All the way through this tour it has been gradually getting better," Strauss told reporters. "I thought he looked pretty good [in the warm-up match] - and in his third spell, he didn't seem like he had any ill-effects from his first couple."

"He's had a little bit more workload in this game than he's been used to, and we've obviously got to be confident he can up that workload even more for the Test match. We'll have to judge it pretty carefully. But at the moment, we're quite confident."

Anderson is England's most experienced bowler and claimed a career-best 5 for 23 to help them secure the one-day series 2-1. He is central to England's bowling plans for the Test series and his absence would leave a huge hole. Strauss admitted that the injury will have to be closely monitored, especially given the workload that fast bowlers will have on the hard

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## Bayern go goal

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absences of French star Franck Ribery in the first half of the season, notched a double either side of half-time following a Mergim Mavric own goal.

Croatian star Danijel Prandic completed the rout ten minutes after the restart.

Christian Fuchs hit a consolation for Bochum, who are now in the bottom four.

"The players have digested the win over Juventus very

well," van Gaal enthused.

"They were very concentrated and it's been a great week, the best since I have been in Munich," said the Dutchman, who is reportedly ready to let the out-of-favour Toni return to Italy.

"We are only two points off top spot and that is very satisfying."

Bayern could yet end this weekend below either Werder Bremen or Schalke, who were facing off later Saturday with

both on 28 points.

Hamburg are also on 28 points after a 4-0 destruction of Nuremberg with Eljero Elia scoring a double and Marcell Jansen and Tunay Torun likewise on target as all the goals came in the second half.

Hertha on Friday had Colombian Adrian Ramos to thank for both goals as the Berliners - winless since the opening day of the season - drew 2-2 with Leverkusen.

## Tiger sends shockwaves



AFP, Orlando

Tiger Woods faced more fallout from his sex scandal Sunday as stunned rivals said they looked forward to his return after an indefinite break in his golfing career and sponsors pondered their future cooperation with the billion-dollar athlete.

Woods announced Friday he was taking a hiatus from professional golf and admitted he had cheated on wife Elin after reports that 10 women had claimed to have had sexual relationships with the 14-time major champion.

"It's a shock. It was most definitely a shock to everybody to hear what has been going on," third-ranked US golfer Steve Stricker said. "Hopefully he gets it straight. Staying away is a great thing to get his family life in order."

World number one Woods, who has a son and daughter with Elin, said he wanted to work on being a better husband, father and person.

Australian golf legend Greg Norman said those should be his priorities for now.

"It's not a good position to be in," Norman said. "He has to sort out his private life first and foremost. There's a lot of heartache for him. There may be some fallout. There are individuals who may have to change."

"The important thing is he gets it right and does what he has to do to get himself back out on the golfcourse. Tiger will come out of this."

A major concern is how a prolonged absence by the game's greatest player will hit the sport. Television viewership was down 50 percent when he was out with knee injury and a tough economy has already cut into golf sponsorships.

"The game of golf is bigger than anybody," Norman said. "Golf is hurt without him in the field but the game will go on."

Woods sponsor Gillette announced Saturday it would phase him out of advertisements while he takes a break from golf, calling it a supportive move.

"As Tiger takes a break from the public eye, we will support his desire for privacy by limiting his role in our marketing programs," a Gillette

statement said without announcing a timetable for the resumption of use of Woods' image.

Accenture took down an image of Woods on its website and AT&T, which backs the PGA event operated by Woods' foundation, said in a statement, "We are presently evaluating our ongoing relationship with him."

However, Nike, which is Woods' largest corporate partner with a deal estimated at 40 million dollars a year, stood by him. "He is the best golfer in the world and one of the greatest athletes of his era," Nike spokeswoman Beth Gast said.

EA Sports, the video game company, also released a statement declaring the relationship "unchanged."

But according to The New York Times, the company will have to decide whether and how to use Woods to market a new game in 2010.

Women such as a show club hostess, pancake restaurant waitress, porn star and cocktail waitress have alleged affairs with Woods, whose squeaky-clean image was shattered, raising concerns of sponsors pulling away from golf.

Woods has apologized for his infidelity, including to his wife Elin who has bought a large estate on an island near her hometown outside of Stockholm.

Woods became a billionaire mainly through endorsements but his TV allure, as a Superman-like player rarely overtaken when leading late, brought sponsors and huge prize money to the PGA, already hit by cuts due to the struggling economy.

Stricker pondered the now-shattered notion so many Woods fans had that he was as impressive out of the spotlight as he was when winning golf titles.

"It's unfair how we have built him up over the years," Stricker said. "On the course he's one of a kind. No one really knows what he was like off the course. He's a tough guy to get around. He has his own little group."

US PGA veteran Brad Faxon agreed that Woods is vital to the PGA's future.

"We're all hoping Tiger comes back and he fixes everything he needs to fix because we need him out here," Faxon said. "He's such a dynamic personality and I know [people] want to have him out on tour as soon as we can get him."

## Hussey will open if needed



CRICINFO, undated

The under-pressure Michael Hussey will return to open if asked, but believes Shane Watson is currently the best man for the top spot. Shane Warne has joined the critics who believe Hussey is on his last legs, with him saying the batsman should have shifted places to fit Watson into the middle order.

Hussey has scored reasonably well in the first two Tests against West Indies, with 66, 41 and 29, but has been scratchy, especially at the start of his innings. While he is happy to move around, he said it wasn't his role to ask the selectors or Ricky Ponting for a switch in the batting order.

"They haven't approached me and at this stage they see Shane as the best option to open - and he has responded affirmatively - with me at No. 4," Hussey said in the Sunday Telegraph. "I would happily open the batting for Australia. But Shane Watson proved in the Adelaide Test that he has the technique and temperament to be a very good opener for Australia. Shane can obviously handle the workload as an allrounder."

Marcus North is a state and national team-mate of Hussey and was "pretty shocked" by the criticism. "There's been a

bit of debate about his position, but his form over in